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**Transportation Committee**

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**SSB 6325**

**Brief Description:** Adjusting provisions of the special license plate law.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Highways & Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Haugen and Esser).

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Makes technical corrections to the special license plate review board process.
- Disabled parking emblems must be made available for special license plates.

**Hearing Date:** 3/01/04

**Staff:** Page Scott (786-7301).

**Background:**

The Special License Plate Review Board (SLPRB) was created in 2003 by ESHB 1592. The SLPRB is charged with reviewing special license plate applications from groups requesting the creation of a special license plate series. If an organization applying for a new special license plate is unable to prepay the start-up costs, the initial revenue generated from the plate sales must be deposited into the motor vehicle account until the state has been reimbursed for these costs. The state must be reimbursed within two years from the date the plates are available. If the state is not reimbursed within the first two years, the plate series will be placed on probation for one year. If the state has not been fully reimbursed at the end of the probationary period, the plate series will be discontinued.

Government entities may apply for new special license plate series. To be eligible, the entity must be a political subdivision, a federally recognized tribe, a state agency, or a community or technical college. State agencies that apply must have both the permission of the agency director and express statutory authority to apply for a special license plate series.

Vehicle owners who qualify for special disabled parking privileges are entitled to receive from the Department of Licensing (DOL) a removable windshield placard and one set of disabled parking license plates bearing the international symbol of access. In order to qualify for disabled parking privileges, a person's disability must limit or impair his or her ability to walk or the distances he or she is able to walk. The person's disability must meet certain requirements and be certified by a licensed physician or licensed advanced registered nurse practitioner.

**Summary of Bill:**

The requirement that an agency have express statutory authority to apply for a special license plate series is removed.

The time period in which the state must be reimbursed for the costs of a new special license plate series is clarified.

The Department of Licensing (DOL) must offer disabled parking versions of special license plates to persons who qualify for disabled parking privileges. The plates must display an emblem of the universal symbol of access incorporated in the background of the special license plate. The DOL may charge the appropriate fee for the special license plate, but may not charge an additional fee for the inclusion of the disabled parking symbol on the special plate. The disabled parking version of a special license plate is to be administered in the same way as other disabled parking license plates issued by the DOL under current law.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** Sections 1 and 2 of the bill take effect November 1, 2004 and sections 3 and 4 take effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.